

Statements of Support: Achievement Level Setting for the Smarter Balanced Assessments

Achievement level setting, also known as standard setting, is the process for establishing one or more threshold scores on an assessment, making it possible to create categories of performance. To ensure the technical validity and appropriate oversight of this process, Smarter Balanced engaged an external auditor, an Achievement Level Setting Advisory Panel and its standing Technical Advisory Committee to review the recommendations before they were presented to the states for approval.

The auditor and both advisory panels certified that Smarter Balanced conducted a valid process that is consistent with best practice in the field. Below are their statements of support for the methodology, design and implementation of the achievement level setting process.

Statement from External Auditor

“It is my conclusion that the standard setting activities described in this report were designed and conducted appropriately so as to yield defensible performance standards grounded in the knowledge, skills, and expectations represented by the ALDs.”

-Gregory J. Cizek*

“Observation and Report on Smarter Balanced Standard Setting,” published Oct. 2014 [LINK]

*Biographical Statement about the Auditor: Gregory Cizek is professor of Educational Measurement and Evaluation at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is the recipient of the 2006 AERA Division D award for Significant Contribution to Educational Measurement and Research Methodology and the 2007 recipient of the National Council on Measurement in Education award for Outstanding Dissemination of Educational Measurement Concepts. He served from 2007-2009 as an appointed member of the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), which oversees the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Cizek received his Ph.D. from Michigan State University.

Advisory Panel Endorsement

“After reviewing the information about the Achievement Level Setting activities and the auditors’ report, the Advisory Panel confirms the design and procedures for the Achievement Level Setting and the Vertical Articulation were implemented as planned, represent a valid process that is consistent with best practices in standard setting, and support the defensibility of the content-based performance standards.”

Unanimously endorsed October 28, 2014, by the Achievement Level Setting Advisory Panel.

Advisory Panel Members	
Luz Bay	The College Board
Michael Briscoe	Student Achievement Partners
Chad Buckendahl	Alpine Testing Solutions

Advisory Panel Members	
David Conley	Educational Policy Improvement Center
Robert Lissitz	University of Maryland
Susan Loomis	Consultant
Susan Phillips	Consultant
Joseph Ryan	Smarter Balanced TAC
William Schmidt	Michigan State University
Stephen Sireci	University of Massachusetts Amherst

Technical Advisory Committee Endorsement

“The Technical Advisory Committee concludes that the Smarter Balanced achievement level setting design and implementation reflect contemporary professional practice and represent a valid process that supports the defensibility of the content-based performance standards.”

Unanimously endorsed October 30, 2014, by the Smarter Balanced Technical Advisory Committee

Technical Advisory Committee Members	
Jamal Abedi	University of California, Davis
Randy Bennett	Educational Testing Service
Derek C. Briggs	University of Colorado at Boulder
Gregory J. Cizek	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Brian Gong	National Center for Improvement of Educational Assessment
Edward Haertel	Stanford University
Joan Herman	National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST), UCLA

Technical Advisory Committee Members	
G. Gage Kingsbury	Consultant
W. James Popham	University of California, Los Angeles
Joseph Ryan	Educational Measurement Systems